PAGE, He said, sir, the water itself was a good healthy water: but for the party that owed it, he might have more diseases than he knew for.

FAL. Men of all sorts take a pride to gird at me[8]: The brain of this foolish-compounded clay, man, is not able to vent any thing that tends to laughter, more than I invent, or is invented on me: I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men. I do here walk before thee, like a sow, that hath overwhelmed all her litter but one. If the prince put thee into my service for

Investigating diseases by the inspection of urine only, was once so much the fashion, that Linacre, the founder of the College of Physicians, formed a statute to restrain apothecaries from carrying the *water* of their patients to a doctor, and afterwards giving medicines, in consequence of the opinions they received concerning* it. This statute was, soon after, followed by another, which forbade the doctors themselves to pronounce on any disorder from such an uncertain diagnostic.

John Day, the author of a comedy called Law Tricks, or Who would have thought it? 1603, describes an apothecary thus: "— his house is set round with patients twice or thrice a day, and because they'll be sure not to want drink, every one brings *his own water* in an urinal with him."

Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Scornful Lady :

" I'll make her cry so much, that the physician,
" If she fall sick upon it, shall want *urine*
" To find the cause by."

It will scarcely be believed hereafter, that in the years 1775 and 1776, a German, who had been a servant in a public riding-school, (from which he was discharged for insufficiency,) revived this exploded practice of *water-casting.* After he had amply increased the bills of mortality, and been publicly hung up to* the ridicule of those who had too much sense to consult him, as a monument of the folly of his patients, he retired with a princely

fortune, and perhaps is now indulging a hearty laugh at the expence of English credulity. STEEVENS.

The time is not yet come, when this is to be thought incredible. The same impudent quackery is carried on at this day.

BOSWELL.

[8] —to GIRD at me;] L. e, to *gibe*. So, in Lyly's Mother Bombie, 1594: "We maids are mad wenches: *we gird* theirs, and flout them/' &c. STEEVENS.